How Do We Work This Out?

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How Do We Work This Out?

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Summary

The next installment of the Will Graham Had a Secret. Not a huge amount of smut in this one (but there is, of course, some) as Will attempts to negotiate his relationship with Hannibal and realises that Hannibal has more than a few issues with Will's past. Don't worry, it all ends well!

A word of warning, Hannibal is a big, fat slut-shamer in this installment but this in no way reflects my own views.

Notes

Sorry this has taken so long to put out there, but I was busy having a baby which I think is an excellent excuse. I do intend to write more of this series, but the aforementioned baby takes up a lot of my time so it may be a good while before I write more.

You don't need to have read the rest of the series for this to make sense, but it certainly will help.

See the end of the work for more notes

It had been three months since Will and Hannibal had first started fucking.

Three months of stupendous and, often, very dirty sex.

Three months of waking up together almost every morning.

Three months of the kind of intimacy that Will hadn't experienced in decades.

Will wasn't sure how he had got to this point, but he knew he was in love with Hannibal, and he was reasonably certain that Hannibal felt the same way about him. Will also knew that he wanted to make their relationship public, but that was where they seemed to differ.

Will had never officially come out as bisexual. He'd never really felt it was anyone's business and, since he never had relationships, it didn't really feel like something that mattered. Now, however, he was more than ready to let people know he was in a relationship with a man. Not by declaring it from the rooftops or anything, that wasn't Will's style, but simply by being able to introduce Hannibal as his partner, or by being able to touch him or hold him in public. Will dealt enough in secrets and lies when he had to use his empathy disorder to get into the heads of murderers, he didn't want secrets and lies in his ordinary life.

Hannibal, however, surprised Will by wanting things to remain between them. He put this down to enjoying his consultancy work with the FBI and not wanting to be seen as having a conflict of interest.

"You'll still be able to consult for the FBI though, Hannibal. Jack values your insight. The only issue is you remaining my psychiatrist — however unofficial. And that's easily rectified, you just refer me to someone else."

"But I don't *want* to refer you to somebody else, Will."

"Why not?"

“I like being the only one inside your head.”

Will tended to drop the conversation here. It was as close as they ever came to arguing and he couldn’t be bothered pursuing it. But as time wore on, he was finding it harder and harder to keep their relationship secret, and harder and harder to accept Hannibal’s excuses. But he was also finding it increasingly difficult to say those all-important three little words to Hannibal. Because if Hannibal didn’t see what they had as special enough to be public, he probably wouldn’t welcome Will imparting his innermost feelings to him either.

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After five months of their relationship, Will began to suspect another motive behind Hannibal’s unwillingness to refer him to another psychiatrist and go public.

Hannibal was jealous. Jealous, possessive, and more than a little bit childish.

Will had just spent the last two-and-a-half-hours turning the Lithuanian into a gibbering wreck, repeatedly bringing him to the edge of orgasm with his fingers, his tongue and his cock, before denying him release and then starting all over again. By the time he eventually allowed Hannibal to come, the man was on the verge of tears, shaking, sweating and no longer able to string together coherent words in any language. Hannibal’s eventual orgasm was something to behold, with rope after rope of hot come shooting from his dick, coating his stomach, his chest and even his chin. It took him precisely half an hour before he could move or speak again.

“I doubt you learned how to do that in a bathroom stall, Will.”

Will laughed. “No. That was from one of my escapades in the motel next door. The guy kept me on edge for a good few hours.” Will didn’t really see the harm in mentioning his past dalliances. Hannibal knew what Will used to get up to. After all, Hannibal had been one of the men Will had gotten up to it with.

But the dark look that crossed Hannibal's face at that moment made Will think again. It was a subtle change and someone who didn't know Hannibal as intimately as Will might miss it, but the man looked positively murderous.

"I must shower," he said curtly, abruptly getting off the bed and retreating to his en suite.

Will considered things while Hannibal showered. There was, of course, the time when they first got together, when Will had joked about having been around a bit. Hannibal had looked jealous then. And then there was all the times the psychiatrist had mentioned wanting to be the only one inside Will's head. Plus the countless digs about what Will had learned in bathroom stalls over the years.

It suddenly became pretty clear.

Hannibal either didn't entirely trust Will not to run off and fuck some new psychiatrist, or he thought that if other people knew Will was sexually available then he'd be inundated with offers and leave Hannibal in a heartbeat.

Will knew neither situation was true, but Hannibal clearly didn't. And rather than discussing it with Will rationally, he was apparently determined to keep it all inside and be a dick about it.

Will pulled on his discarded boxers and t-shirt while he waited for Hannibal to finish in the shower. It was probably now or never to have this conversation.

A few minutes later, Hannibal emerged from the ensuite, clean and flushed from the hot water, wearing nothing but a towel around his waist. Will watched him as he fetched a clean pair of ridiculously expensive pyjama pants from a drawer, pulled them on and got under the bedcovers.

"Have you finished being stroppy yet, Hannibal? Or should I wait a bit longer to have an adult conversation with you?" On reflection, Will thought, snarkiness probably wasn't the best way to go into the discussion, but there was nothing he could do about it now.

“I wasn’t aware I was being ‘stroppy,' as you put it.” Will wondered if Hannibal was aware he was being a perfect example of stroppiness even as he denied it, all hard stare, cold eyes and full lips pressed into a thin line.

“Well, then, I’d like to discuss the small matter of your incessant jealousy and when I might expect it to sink to normal levels. Because, I’m getting a bit bored of it.”

Hannibal exhaled slowly through his nose and the murderous look was back. Will wondered if Hannibal knew just how terrifying he could appear when he wanted to. “My *jealousy*, Will?”

“Yes, Hannibal. Your *jealousy*. The jealousy that stops you from referring me to another psychiatrist. The jealousy that means our relationship stays a dirty little secret. The jealousy that seems to flare up when you remember that I wasn’t exactly celibate in my youth. *Your*. Jealousy.” Will knew he was precariously close to snapping, but his realisations had made him angry. And the way Hannibal was attempting to deny he was jealous was just winding him up.

He stared Hannibal down for what felt like an eternity when the older man eventually shifted, lowering his eyes before continuing. “I will admit that I do not like the thought of you with another psychiatrist, Will. I like being the one who gets to know everything about you and I think I would lose some of that if I were to give you a referral. And I would be forced to give you a referral if we were open about our relationship.

“As for being jealous about your past… I confess, I would prefer it if others hadn’t known you intimately. I know it’s not quite rational, but I do wonder sometimes if you can be happy with just one person.”

Will saw this as his opportunity, his golden chance to tell Hannibal that he loved him. He mentally prepared to tell the older man that he *could* be happy with just one person, that he *was* happy and that he loved Hannibal when the psychiatrist, in a rare moment of not being completely self-aware, continued angrily.

“I often wonder, now you’ve reignited the flames of that sexuality you kept snuffed for so long, if you find yourself longing for sex with strangers in bars. I wonder how long it might be before you let them debase you like you did before, how long before you go in search of men who’ll happily treat you like a cheap whore for your pleasure.”

Will blinked slowly, wondering if he’d heard the other man quite right. But no, Hannibal had definitely said that. He didn’t trust himself to speak for a moment, so instead continued getting dressed, pulling on his jeans, quickly followed by his shoes, socks and a jumper. He couldn’t bring himself to even look at Hannibal. Instead he walked to the bedroom door and, without turning around, said, “I was going to tell you that I love you but I don’t think I can after that. It’s no wonder you don’t want people to know about us. If anyone knew about my *whorish* ways you’d be a laughing stock, wouldn’t you? Especially because I just wouldn’t be able to help myself. I’d let everyone have a go, including my new psychiatrist, and you’d just get left behind. Except, you forget, until five months ago, I was practically celibate, so I clearly have more than a modicum of self control.” Will moved to open the bedroom door.

“Will, I -”

“No, Hannibal, I think I’ve heard enough from you to last me a while. Please don’t contact me. And if Jack invites you to a crime scene, tell him you’re busy. I don’t want to see you.”

With that, Will walked out of the bedroom, out of the house and climbed into his car, driving away towards Wolf Trap before Hannibal could have any chance to come after him.

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Will was furious with Hannibal. He knew his past wasn’t entirely squeaky clean, but that was mostly down to a need for sexual relief combined with a lack of desire for a relationship. During that period, there were brief interludes where he was in relationships and he didn’t go cruising for sex during those times. He wasn’t some sex addict who gave up his asshole to every passing guy. Hannibal knew all of this, he and Will had spoken about it at length. So for Hannibal to dredge it up and make it sound as if Will was some kind of common slut was humiliating and enraging.

Clearly Hannibal did not feel for Will anywhere near as strongly as Will felt for him.

Will's anger didn't abate over the ensuing days and weeks. After a week of not seeing Hannibal at all, he went to Jack and asked for a new psychiatrist to be found, stating that he didn't feel Hannibal's methods were right for him. Jack was surprised and a little disappointed — he liked Hannibal and felt he and Will made a dynamic pair when it came to crime scenes — but he had to respect Will's wishes if he wanted to keep him on his team. A few enquiries found Doctor Edie Swan, a middle-aged soccer mom type with four kids and a kindly demeanour. Will didn't mind talking to her, but he knew she didn't understand him in the way that Hannibal had. Still, it was better than seeing the man himself.

After four weeks, Will was forced to admit that he did, in fact, miss Hannibal. While he was still furious with him, he missed the other man's company, their closeness, his touch on his skin. But knowing what Hannibal thought of him, he knew there was no way he could go back to him, not now.

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It was around this time that Will was working on a particularly grisly case in Minnesota, in which a killer was kidnapping, killing and, as it turned out, eating young women. Will had tracked Garrett Jacob Hobbs to his house and had been forced to shoot him dead but not, unfortunately, before the man killed his wife and daughter. Shook up by this incident, Will was advised by Doctor Swan to take some time off from the Bureau, so Will spent a few weeks at home on sick leave, doing very little other than walking his dogs and going fishing. Jack wasn't exactly happy about this but, Doctor Swan was firm and the FBI was under strict instructions not to so much as text Will while he was on leave.

It should have been an ideal existence but, if he thought about it too much, he noticed just how lonely he was while he spent all this time at home. So he shoved those thoughts to the back of his mind and got on with his recovery, not giving Hannibal or anyone else a second thought.

It came, then, as something of a surprise for Will, then, on arriving back from a hike through the woods with his dogs to see Hannibal's Bentley parked outside his house, while the man himself stood on his front porch.

Will steeled himself for an ugly confrontation and began to approach the house, stopping only when he saw the state of the usually impeccable man.

Hannibal's normally neat hair had grown out and was unkempt, while he was displaying more than a few days growth along his jaw. He was wearing slacks and shoes, but had teamed them with an old jumper that had clearly seen better days. His entire demeanour suggested fatigue, and there was an incredible sadness pouring from his tired eyes.

Will wondered if this was really as a result of their breakup or if it was something else. A vindictive voice deep inside his brain told him he hoped it *was* because of their breakup, but Will shook those thoughts quickly. Instead, he continued moving towards the house until he stood on the porch, next to his former psychiatrist and lover.

"Will…" Hannibal choked out, his accent thick, his voice full of barely restrained emotion. "I'm sorry for coming here. I know you said you did not wish to see me again, but Alana told me what you'd been through with the Minnesota Shrike case and I had to check you were alright."

"Well, as you can see, Hannibal, I'm fine. Nothing that a bit of time off won't cure. How are you?" Will half wondered why he even asked how Hannibal was doing, especially when it was so obvious that he wasn't doing at all well, but it was almost as if Will needed to hear it from Hannibal's own lips.

"I… have not been doing well, Will. A combination of missing you and knowing I only have myself to blame has been taking its toll." Will felt a burst of smug satisfaction that he almost instantly felt ashamed of. Hannibal did look dreadful, nothing like the man Will had come to love only a few short weeks ago.

Will prepared himself to ask Hannibal to leave but, instead, found himself asking, "Would you like to come in? I could make coffee."

Hannibal exhaled deeply and Will visibly saw him relax. "I would like that, Will."

Will silently turned and let them into the house. Hannibal stood awkwardly by the door until Will asked him to sit, before proceeding to feed the dogs and make a pot of coffee. While Will waited for it to brew, he had a moment to gather his thoughts. He loved Hannibal, he knew that, but he was still so angry with him. He didn't know if Hannibal intended to explain himself, but he did know that whatever transpired in this room right now would probably define both of their lives for some time to come.

Turning with mugs of coffee in hand, Will saw Hannibal sitting on his sofa, looking nervous and uncomfortable. He was willing to bet that this was the first time Hannibal had looked anything other than perfectly composed in his life. He handed him a cup. “It’s probably not as good as the stuff you’re used to.”

Hannibal breathed in the aroma for a moment before murmuring, “This is perfect, Will, I assure you.”

They sat in awkward silence for a few moments until Will began to wonder if the other man intended to speak at all. Suddenly, Hannibal began.

“What I said to you a few weeks ago, Will… That was inexcusable. I was trying to blame you for my own feelings of inadequacy and I said things I didn’t mean in the slightest. I know you’re angry and I know you probably can’t forgive me. But I do want you to know that I have nothing but the utmost respect for you.”

“Why would you feel inadequate, Hannibal?”

“Because before I met you I had never thought it was possible for me to truly love another human being. But we’re so identically different — and you are so incredibly beautiful — that I found myself drowning in my feelings for you. I am not always a… a rational man and I felt that I was bound to lose you since someone else would surely notice you, as they had done before. I let these feelings of jealousy and inadequacy control me and managed to push you away — just as I had sought to avoid doing.”

“What pushed me away, Hannibal, was your refusal to allow me any agency in this. So what if someone else noticed me? That doesn’t mean I’d have run off with them. I loved you. I… I still do. I never though I could be happy in a relationship, but I was with you. Until you ruined it all, anyway.”

“Should I entirely give up hope of us being together, Will?”

Well, there was the million dollar question. Will wanted to be with Hannibal. He wanted to be with Hannibal so badly it hurt. But he needed to know that Hannibal wasn’t going to try to control him anymore, that he would let Will have an equal share of the agency in the relationship.

“If we were to try again, Hannibal, I’d need certain assurances from you.” Hannibal just looked at Will quizzically and Will knew he was thinking he’d dance naked through Jack Crawford’s office if it meant Will would come back to him. “I need our relationship to be public. You won’t be my psychiatrist any more, but that doesn’t mean we’d be any less intimate. I also need you to stop thinking about my past. Yes, I put it about a bit when I was younger, but that doesn’t change what’s between us and it doesn’t mean I’m going to run off with someone else. Does that sound amenable to you?”

The relief washing over Hannibal was palpable. “Of course, Will. That is all more than acceptable.”

Will smiled. “There’s one more thing.”

“Anything.”

“I need you to shave and, as soon as possible, get a haircut. You look a mess.”

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Hannibal couldn’t do anything about his hair right away, but he could at least shave while at Will’s. Will waited in his bedroom while Hannibal borrowed his razor and shaved and showered in the bathroom, eventually wandering back in wearing nothing but a towel thrown casually around his waist.

Will swallowed, hard. He could see that Hannibal had lost some weight over the last few weeks, but he was still a beautiful man, all tight muscle with just a hint of softness around his stomach, a giveaway of the culinary indulgences he was prone to. His jaw was now smooth and chiselled, a way away from the scruff that had adorned it only half an hour previously. Like this, the longer hair quite suited him, giving him a boyish quality that contrasted with the sense of the dominant predator, the alpha male, Will had always got from the man.

Hannibal seemed, meanwhile, just as taken aback by Will, as if he couldn't believe he was still there. Perhaps he had thought Will would make a break for it while he was in the shower. He looked uncertain, unsure in a way that Will wasn't used to from him and he couldn't bear it for a moment longer.

The younger man stood up and strode over to Hannibal, cupping his jaw in his hand and pressing a bruising kiss against those full plush lips. While Hannibal was definitely broader than Will, there was less than two inches difference between them in height and Will himself was hardly puny. He used this to his advantage, pulling Hannibal back towards the bed, never letting their lips part.

It was Hannibal who broke this kiss. "Are you sure, Will?"

"We've already said we love each other, Hannibal. I'm not sure there's much point in taking things slowly." Will let the other man's towel fall to the floor before pushing him down on to the bed and climbing up to straddle his waist.

Will began to undo the buttons on his shirt, but Hannibal pushed his hands away, continuing the task himself slowly, almost reverently, his breath seeming to catch every time another glimpse of Will was revealed. It took a moment, but Will quickly realised what this was: it was worship.

Knowing that, he allowed himself to be pushed down on to the bed as Hannibal manoeuvred himself above him on all fours, leaning down to kiss Will full on the mouth. Hannibal took his time removing Will's shirt before slowly kissing his way down the younger man's neck, chest and stomach, stopping along the way to suck and lave Will's sensitive nipples and lick languorous circles around his naval. He was, Will realised, mapping every last part of him and committing it to memory. And Will wasn't about to complain.

Especially not as Hannibal began to undo his fly and remove Will's jeans and boxers. Around this point, Will's mind went a little fuzzy as Hannibal launched himself into the best blow job Will had ever been fortunate enough to receive. The older man moved slowly and sensuously, working Will with his lips and tongue, taking every inch of him down his throat. All Will could do was wind his fingers into Hannibal's over-long hair and try not to buck his hips too hard.

After what seemed like hours of this sweet torture, Will finally came — crying out Hannibal's name as he shot ropes of come down the man's throat. Hannibal, for his part, swallowed slowly, luxuriously, as if determined to taste every last drop Will had to offer.

Will smirked at his lover. "What you do with that mouth, Hannibal… It's positively sinful. Now, let me return the favour…"

However, as Will moved to push the older man on to his back, he felt a damp stickiness on the bed sheets and realised that Hannibal had been brought to orgasm simply by the act of giving Will pleasure.

"I'll be more than happy to let you, Will, but I'll need a little while to recover, I believe."

Will laughed and pulled Hannibal close, kissing him deeply. "How do you think we should tell people about us? I don't really want to do some big, formal announcement. Perhaps just be seen together in public and let people work it out themselves."

"I quite agree, Will. Maybe I should throw a dinner party."

End Notes

If I do write more, the implication is that Hannibal is very much a cannibal and Will will almost certainly work this out eventually. Just so you know!

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